Confidential until released for publication as under :-

Morning Papers .. 7th November, 1944.
Evening Papers .. 7th November, 1944.

VEGETABLE ACREAGES IN QUEENSLAND.

By collecting returns and compiling statistics of the proposed plantings of vegetable growers throughout Queensland, this Office is co-operating with the Department of Agriculture and Stock in the development of its plans for the better guidance of growers towards the goal of eliminating periodical gluts and shortages in the flow of vegetables to market.

During the last few months returns have been received from 13,961 vegetable growers, of whom 11,698 had planted, or intended planting, vegetables during the months of July to December, 1944. The number of planters of vegetables for human consumption is 10,069, and 5,894 growers planted vegetables for animal fodder. The table below shows, for each individual vegetable planted for human consumption, the total of the proposed acreages for the last six months of 1944, together with comparable figures for 1943 and the increase or decrease in 1944 on 1943. In addition, there were, for the last six months of 1944, proposed plantings of 31,892 acres of various types of vegetables for animal fodder, compared with 10,676 acres for the same period of 1943.

Proposed Plantings of Vegetables for Human Consumption.

Vegetable.	Six Months July to December -		Increase or Decrease (-) in 1944 compared with 1943.	
	1944.	1943.		
	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Per Cent.
Potatoes (English) ..	11,420	7,150	4,270	60
Potatoes (Sweet) ..	3,244	2,982	262	9
Turnips (Swede) ..	447	291	156	54
Turnips (White) ..	62	45	17	38
Carrots	1,028	766	262	34
Parsnips	41	50	- 9	- 18
Beetroot	825	481	344	72
Onions (White) ..	425	138	287	208
Onions (Brown) ..	855	282	573	203
Tomatoes	7,864	6,630	1,234	19
Beans (French) ..	4,315	3,334	981	29
Beans (Navy) ..	1,454	799	655	82
Green Peas	2,183	1,872	311	17
Cabbages	1,916	2,241	- 325	- 15
Cauliflowers	142	99	43	43
Lettuce	583	362	221	61
Silver Beet and Spinach	40	40	.	.
Melons	3,103	2,251	852	38
Pumpkins	26,842	17,159	9,683	56
Marrows and Squashes ..	1,146	1,217	- 71	- 6
Cucumbers	3,035	2,347	688	29
Sweet Corn	500	496	4	1
Other	418	395	23	6
TOTAL:	71,888	51,427	20,461	40

Increases of 40 per cent. or more are shown by onions, navy beans, beetroot, lettuce, English potatoes, pumpkins, swede turnips and cauliflowers.

Having compared the figures with the acreage targets set by the Commonwealth Government, the Under Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Stock, comments as follows :-

POTATOES (English):

With the exception of July, in which month planting slightly exceeded the target, each month is under-planted by several thousand acres.

ONIONS AND SWEDE TURNIPS:

The general position of onions and swedes is similar to that for potatoes. July shows a heavy over-planting, but in each of the other months plantings are insufficient by several hundred acres. For onions the shortage amounts to about 400 acres, and for swedes over 100 acres, a month.

CARROTS:

Estimated sowings of carrots during July and August were about 200 acres and 150 acres over the target, and this is being reflected in the heavy over-supply at present available for the market. In September, plantings about equal the target, but in October, November and December more than 100 additional acres a month could be sown.

BEETROOT:

July and August plantings greatly exceeded the target, especially July, and in consequence very large tonnages are now being harvested. Fortunately, much of the surplus is being absorbed by canneries. September planting was sufficient but during October, November and December a shortage of 40 acres a month is shown.

TOMATOES:

During each month tomato acreages were more than double the target. Tomatoes, however, are grown over a wide area and as the crop is particularly subject to weather conditions, it is not easy to forecast the ultimate market position. For instance, the recent dry spell during October would undoubtedly affect the plantings during that month, and the late frost at Stanthorpe in October also damaged some of the early crops in that district.

FRENCH BEANS:

The figures indicate that this crop also would be planted to excess in each month, but like tomatoes it also is very subject to weather conditions. July is shown as 300 acres, and August as 200 acres, in excess of the target, thus accounting for the glutted market during the past few weeks, whilst the effect of the dry weather has been reflected in the poor quality of many consignments being marketed. Plantings during September, October and November are shown to be lower than the previous months but are still about 25 per cent. over the target, whilst December is about 50 per cent. above. The position will, however, probably be offset by the lower plantings of peas in these months.

GREEN PEAS:

The figures reveal that during July over 1,000 acres of peas were intended to be planted and this figure is nearly three times the acreage required. In August and September the target was also exceeded by about 200 acres. In October, November and December, however, the proposed plantings are shown as 200 acres below the target.

CABBAGES:

The target was exceeded by 180 acres in July plantings and by about 60 acres in August. The September and October acreages about equal requirements, but November and December figures show a 50 per cent. excess acreage.

CAULIFLOWERS:

July planting was sufficient but for the remaining months, except December, plantings are shown as 25 acres a month below requirements. December plantings are shown as double the target.

LETTUCE:

The planting in July was about 30 per cent. above, and in August 20 per cent. above, the acreage required. In the other months plantings are about equal to the demand, with the exception of December which is 20 per cent. below the target.

PUMPKINS:

The figures indicate that plantings every month will be several thousand acres in excess of the target.

MARROWS AND SQUASHES:

Only a comparatively small acreage of these crops is required and the estimates indicate that they will be overplanted by about 100 acres a month.

CUCUMBERS:

In both July and August the estimated plantings were over 800 acres, or about five times in excess of the target. In September and October, the acreage shown is still twice the target, and in November and December it is about 50 per cent. above.

COLIN CLARK

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6th November, 1944.